



EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE NORTHWEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3017625

Address: 9510 Stone Avenue N.

Applicant: Josh Johns, E. Cobb Architects, for Stone North LLC

Date of Meeting: Monday, September 15, 2014

Board Members Present: David Neiman, Chair
Marc Angelillo
Ellen Cecil
Jerry Coburn
Dale Kutzero

DPD Staff Present: Michael Dorcy

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: C2-65

Nearby Zones: (North) C2
(South) C2
(East) LR3
(West) C2

Lot Area: 15,000 SF



Current Development:

Office building, covered and uncovered storage

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

Immediately to the north is a 6-story mixed-use building of recent vintage. To the west and north primarily are a number of commercial office and storage facilities, most with minimal street-front glazing, and surface parking lots for commercial vehicles. Directly to the west across Stone Avenue N. is a 3-4 story warehouse storage building without any fenestration. Apart from the residential mixed-use building immediately to the north of the proposal site, most of the more recent residential development in the area has consisted of attached town homes. There are older single-family homes north, south and east of the site. Licton Springs Park lies one and a half blocks due east of the site. Wilson Pacific elementary school, scheduled to be rebuilt and reopened in the next two years is located slightly more than a block due south of the development site; North Seattle Community College lies about a half mile due east of the site.

Access:

Access to parking, which is proposed to be located at grade (and below grade in the preferred scheme) within the building, would be from the alley that abuts the subject property along its east property line. The residential lobby is proposed along N. 95th Street, from the sidewalk that abuts the south property line of the site.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

There are no ECAs on the site; the maximum grade change across the site is approximately 11 feet from the southeast to the northwest corner.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant proposes construction of a 6-story building with 60-74 residential units and 7,000 to 9,600 SF of retail/office space on the ground floor. Parking within the building, at grade (and below grade in the preferred scheme), for anywhere between 9 and 66 vehicles would be accessed from the alley to the east of the site.

FIRST EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE September 15, 2014

The packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3017625) at this website:

http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design_Review_Program/Project_Reviews/Reports/default.asp.

The packet is also available to view in the file, by contacting the Public Resource Center at DPD:

Mailing Public Resource Center

Address: 700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000
P.O. Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

Email: PRC@seattle.gov

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

The applicant presented three alternative development schemes for the site (check the alternatives in the on-line packets). The third and preferred alternative was for 6 stories of residential units above grade, with below grade and at grade parking together with at grade commercial space. Extensive modulation on both the Stone Avenue N. and alley facades, as well as the N. 95th Street façade reduced the perceived mass on each of those fronts while maintaining the impression of one coherent building form (see pp.14-15 in the packet).

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments at the meeting.

<h2>PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS</h2>
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After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Board members provided the following siting and design guidance.

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE September 15, 2014

The Board complimented the design team on the quality of the packet and the analysis provided there. The way the massing of the building was proposed to broken up made sense and was on the right track. The residential entry on N. 95th Street seemed appropriate.

Among the issues identified by the Board were the following:

- The current viability of commercial space along both Stone Avenue N. and N. 95th Street.
- The need for a four-season shadow study to assess impacts on adjacent residential buildings.
- The need for a diagram showing the alignment or non-alignment of proposed windows on the north façade with those of the existing mixed-use building to the north, and also a study to show the relationship between windows and decks along the alley façade as they overlooked the townhomes across the alley.
- More details were needed regarding the proposed wall-climbing plantings along the alley, parking garage wall.

- See the “opportunity for planting at concrete podium roofing between the residential setback and the alley” (p.15); the “opportunity” should be resolved by the time the project is returned for a Recommendation Meeting.
- The Board would expect to see a fuller and more detailed landscape plan at the time of the Recommendation Meeting.
- The rendering on the bottom half of page 16 in the packet indicated a chamfered entry at the corner of Stone Avenue N. and N. 95th Street, while other renderings indicated a recessed rectilinear entry; that should receive fuller study and some resolution. The resolution should carefully evaluate the relationship and potential design impacts between that commercial entry and the proposed residential entry on N. 95th Street.
- The opportunity for more overhead weather protection along N. 95th Street should be explored.
- There was something of an awkwardness the way the commercial space at the southeast corner extended into the one-story element at the alley and the way it expressed itself through the first floor south façade that could benefit from a closer look.
- The Board expressed some hesitancy to wholeheartedly embrace the choices in sizing, access to and articulation of the commercial spaces along each block front, due to some skepticism regarding their viability; would not greater adaptability in the appointment of the spaces be warranted?

DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

The priority Citywide and Neighborhood guidelines identified by the Board as Priority Guidelines are summarized below, while all guidelines remain applicable. For the full text please visit the [Design Review website](#).

CONTEXT & SITE

CS1 Natural Systems and Site Features: Use natural systems/features of the site and its surroundings as a starting point for project design.

CS1-B Sunlight and Natural Ventilation

CS1-B-2. Daylight and Shading: Maximize daylight for interior and exterior spaces and minimize shading on adjacent sites through the placement and/or design of structures on site.

CS1-B-3. Managing Solar Gain: Manage direct sunlight falling on south and west facing facades through shading devices and existing or newly planted trees. natural habitats wherever possible. Consider relocating significant trees and vegetation if retention is not feasible.

CS1-E-2. Adding Interest with Project Drainage: Use project drainage systems as opportunities to add interest to the site through water-related design elements.

CS2 Urban Pattern and Form: Strengthen the most desirable forms, characteristics, and patterns of the streets, block faces, and open spaces in the surrounding area.

CS2-A Location in the City and Neighborhood

CS2-A-2. Architectural Presence: Evaluate the degree of visibility or architectural presence that is appropriate or desired given the context, and design accordingly.

CS2-C Relationship to the Block

CS2-C-1. Corner Sites: Corner sites can serve as gateways or focal points; both require careful detailing at the first three floors due to their high visibility from two or more streets and long distances.

CS2-D Height, Bulk, and Scale

CS2-D-5. Respect for Adjacent Sites: Respect adjacent properties with design and site planning to minimize disrupting the privacy of residents in adjacent buildings.

CS3 Architectural Context and Character: Contribute to the architectural character of the neighborhood.

CS3-A Emphasizing Positive Neighborhood Attributes

CS3-A-2. Contemporary Design: Explore how contemporary designs can contribute to the development of attractive new forms and architectural styles; as expressed through use of new materials or other means.

CS3-A-4. Evolving Neighborhoods: In neighborhoods where architectural character is evolving or otherwise in transition, explore ways for new development to establish a positive and desirable context for others to build upon in the future.

PUBLIC LIFE

PL2 Walkability: Create a safe and comfortable walking environment that is easy to navigate and well-connected to existing pedestrian walkways and features.

PL2-B Safety and Security

PL2-B-2. Lighting for Safety: Provide lighting at sufficient lumen intensities and scales, including pathway illumination, pedestrian and entry lighting, and/or security lights.

PL2-C Weather Protection

PL2-C-1. Locations and Coverage: Overhead weather protection is encouraged and should be located at or near uses that generate pedestrian activity such as entries, retail uses, and transit stops.

PL2-C-3. People-Friendly Spaces: Create an artful and people-friendly space beneath building.

PL3 Street-Level Interaction: Encourage human interaction and activity at the street-level with clear connections to building entries and edges.

PL3-A Entries

PL3-A-2. Common Entries: Multi-story residential buildings need to provide privacy and security for residents but also be welcoming and identifiable to visitors.

PL3-C Retail Edges

PL3-C-1. Porous Edge: Engage passersby with opportunities to interact visually with the building interior using glazing and transparency. Create multiple entries where possible

and make a physical and visual connection between people on the sidewalk and retail activities in the building.

PL4 Active Transportation: Incorporate design features that facilitate active forms of transportation such as walking, bicycling, and use of transit.

PL4-B Planning Ahead for Bicyclists

PL4-B-2. Bike Facilities: Facilities such as bike racks and storage, bike share stations, shower facilities and lockers for bicyclists should be located to maximize convenience, security, and safety.

DESIGN CONCEPT

DC1 Project Uses and Activities: Optimize the arrangement of uses and activities on site.

DC1-C Parking and Service Uses

DC1-C-4. Service Uses: Locate and design service entries, loading docks, and trash receptacles away from pedestrian areas or to a less visible portion of the site to reduce possible impacts of these facilities on building aesthetics and pedestrian circulation.

DC2 Architectural Concept: Develop an architectural concept that will result in a unified and functional design that fits well on the site and within its surroundings.

DC2-A Massing

DC2-A-2. Reducing Perceived Mass: Use secondary architectural elements to reduce the perceived mass of larger projects.

DC2-B Architectural and Facade Composition

DC2-B-2. Blank Walls: Avoid large blank walls along visible façades wherever possible. Where expanses of blank walls, retaining walls, or garage facades are unavoidable, include uses or design treatments at the street level that have human scale and are designed for pedestrians.

DC2-C Secondary Architectural Features

DC2-C-1. Visual Depth and Interest: Add depth to facades where appropriate by incorporating balconies, canopies, awnings, decks, or other secondary elements into the façade design. Add detailing at the street level in order to create interest for the pedestrian and encourage active street life and window shopping (in retail areas).

DC3 Open Space Concept: Integrate open space design with the building design so that they complement each other.

DC3-C Design

DC3-C-2. Amenities/Features: Create attractive outdoor spaces suited to the uses envisioned for the project.

DC4 Exterior Elements and Finishes: Use appropriate and high quality elements and finishes for the building and its open spaces.

DC4-A Exterior Elements and Finishes

DC4-A-1. Exterior Finish Materials: Building exteriors should be constructed of durable and maintainable materials that are attractive even when viewed up close. Materials that have texture, pattern, or lend themselves to a high quality of detailing are encouraged.

DC4-A-2. Climate Appropriateness: Select durable and attractive materials that will age well in Seattle's climate, taking special care to detail corners, edges, and transitions.

DC4-C Lighting

DC4-C-1. Functions: Use lighting both to increase site safety in all locations used by pedestrians and to highlight architectural or landscape details and features such as entries, signs, canopies, plantings, and art.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

At the time of the Early Design Guidance no departures were requested.

BOARD DIRECTION

At the conclusion of the EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE meeting, the Board recommended 5-0 that the applicant move forward to MUP application.

At the Recommendation Meeting the Board would expect to see:

- A study of adjacencies of windows on the north façade vis-à-vis those on the building to the north.
- A complete Landscape Plan and Green Factor worksheet.
- A four season pertinent hour shadow study.
- A Materials Board.
- A Lighting Plan.

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